

# Maurice Hinchey NEWS

## 26<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, NEW YORK

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### HINCHEY COMMENDS FOREST SERVICE DECISION ON FINGER LAKES NATIONAL FOREST

WASHINGTON - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (NY-26) today applauded the U.S. Forest Service announcement that it would not lease for oil and gas drilling in the Finger Lakes National Forest. Earlier this year the Forest Service had solicited public comment on its proposal to lease over 13,000 acres of the FLNF for drilling. Today the Forest Service issued a "no action" decision, meaning it does not consent to drilling.

Hinchey offered the following comments:

*"I applaud the Forest Service's decision to keep oil and gas rigs out of the FLNF. I have worked hard to protect the unspoiled character of the FLNF, and the adoption of alternative 4 - the No Action alternative, ensures that the FLNF will not be compromised by inappropriate drilling activities.*

*"The Forest Service's initial proposal to lease over 13,000 acres of the FLNF for oil and gas development was simply incompatible with New Yorker's recreational enjoyment of the Forest. The FLNF is a popular destination for hikers, campers, horseback riders, and nature enthusiasts. Opportunities for hunting, fishing, skiing, and snowmobiling ensure that the FLNF is used by citizens throughout the year. Oil and gas drilling would have adversely impacted recreation and tourism in the FLNF, through increased traffic, noise and fumes, damage to roads and trails, and risk associated with extracting and transporting oil and natural gas. Drilling activities would have harmed the ecological functions of the Forest by contaminating the water and soil, and would have diminished its undeveloped character through the construction of access roads, drilling pads, pipeline corridors, and other forms of long-lasting degradation."*

During the public comment period Hinchey urged the Forest Service to take the "no action" alternative. He has subsequently worked to prohibit oil and gas drilling in the FLNF through legislative means.